

# Magazine Feature Section

## WAR-TIME TUNES SUNG TO CURE CRIME

Wonderful Results  
Shown By Pittsburg  
Police Quartette  
Whose Melodies Stir  
Memories and Gather  
Together Shattered  
Dreams of Manhood  
and Womanhood



BRITISH TROOPS SINGING "GOD SAVE THE KING" © N.Y.H.



War-time tunes from Europe are now having an effect upon crime and criminals in America, according to alienists.

The idea of song being used to cure crime had its first practical application in Pittsburg, Pa.

Recently the subject has been discussed generally, and the question raised among criminologists whether music that "hath charms to soothe the savage breast" can be of the military kind and do any good in the reformation of men.

Regarding the war tunes, some experts hold that the strains of "Tipperary" or any martial air, will bring prisoners to a realization that their dissipated life has left them unfit to meet the requirements of manhood, and that moral atonement will follow.

Others argue that this particular kind of music—the martial airs—will cause bitter resentment in breasts that should be soothed with gentle melodies.

"Darling I am growing old—Silver threads among the gold."

The strains of this old favorite rang through the cell-room of police headquarters at Pittsburg and in a remote cell an old man bent his head and wept as it called up memories of the past.

The song was by the Pittsburg police quartette and the members were at their nightly task of redeeming prisoners back to a life of rectitude by music. Superintendent of Police W. Noble Matthews, had ordered this innovation in the belief it will soften criminals and reform them.

"Shine upon my brow today—Life is fading fast away."

Another head in another cell bent and a younger man was reminded of his past. There he sat a prisoner charged with burglary while in a distant part of the city a wife and four little children lived under the sting of his one disgraceful act.

As the police quartette continued he had the man in the other cell—the gray-haired old man who was in for begging and faced a workhouse term and who thought of the kind wife whose death left him nothing but a wanderer, joined in:

"Oh my darling you will be, will be Always young and fair to me, Yes my darling you will be"

Always young and fair to me."

While these two men broke down and wept, prisoners confined in other cells for being drunk, cursed the police quartette that disturbed their slumbers. They were in an ill mood and wanted no song. Sentiment was not part of their being. No home and no family awaited them when they would be freed from the workhouse. Only more bad whiskey and another term in the workhouse was the routine life before them.

"It's a long way to Tipperary, It's a long way to go, It's a long way to Tipperary, To the sweetest girl I know."

The four members of the police quartette entered into this Irish lilt with a pleasant vim. Drunken prisoners, who had cursed at being awakened, listened to verse after verse and then in their maudlin state attempted to join in the chorus. Their dull senses were awakened and probably that sense of militarism that is in all of us was aroused.

"Good by Piccadilly, farewell Leicester Square, It's a long, long way to Tipperary but my heart's right there."

The last bit of this popular military song was joined in by the prisoners. Somehow it struck a peculiarly sympathetic cord in their nature. It was the song of the soldier, care-free and happy, going to the front to meet a foe. Trained men going to the front to pit their perfect physical strength against a well trained foe and there in Pittsburg a weakened, drunken being sitting in a cell waiting for trial and sentence to the workhouse.

TEACHES A LESSON.

No court of justice, no workhouse term, no amount of punishment could make that man realize as he did now how he was throwing his physical strength away to become addicted to the liquor habit.

In another hemisphere men of strength were fighting. Their greatest weapon was not their rifles but the physical endurance that kept them in those unsanitary trenches and left them still with the stamina to endure hardships and fight.

On the other hand were men of

desperation, with weakened bodies, with dulled brains, awaiting trial in the police holdover and tomorrow destined to a long period at hard labor. A term in the workhouse that would make their run-down bodies ache under the stress and would make them maddened criminals more desperate than ever against society when they left the city prison for their weakened bodies had been subjected to a physical strain they could not stand because of their excesses and they were determined that well-fed and easy-living society must pay for this torture.

As the last strain rang out the police quartette left the cell-room. The turnkey walked the length of the cells and in No. 1 found the gray-haired man weeping with the strains of "Silver Threads Among the Gold" still ringing through his head.

BACK TO THE COUNTRY.

Chief Matthews was informed and sent for the man.

"You are an old man, Jim. Our records show you have served ten of the last twelve years of your life in the workhouse for petty larceny. Tomorrow you will go back again, you will serve your time again, be released and a few days later we will have you under arrest and you will start over again."

"Jim, there is a farm just out of the city that is the thing for you. You are getting pretty old now and you don't want to spend your last days in the workhouse, and on your death be buried in the Potter's field."

"There are birds out there, Jim. Not prison birds in cages and cells but the kind that fly about and sing—the kind that are free. There's a stream on this farm where you can fish when your day's work is through. There's a good farmer out there to see that you get a reward for your work. He's a friend of mine and he wants you there."

"You will be doing good out there. You'll be making the earth pay you back for what you put into it in energy instead of having the police department of the city putting you in the workhouse to pay back what you have taken away."

Chief Matthews halted. Before Jim was the vision of a farm in spring with green grass, green trees and birds singing. Instead of tasteless sausage and stale bread

as served in the hold-over, there was fresh milk and butter, and home-made country sausage. There were fresh eggs and on Sunday fried spring chicken instead of jail fare.

"My God, Chief, will you?" demanded Jim as he impudently reached out his hands to the Chief.

"Yes, Jim. You can go tomorrow and I'll send a cop along with you to see you get there safely."

ANOTHER "CURE."

The next man who had broken down while the police quartette was singing, was called into the room.

"You're a fine man, aren't you," demanded the Chief, trying a different method on this man who wanted only had committed a crime.

"You, with a fine wife at home and those four little kids depending on you. You get drunk and commit burglary and you're going to the penitentiary and leave your wife at home to support the babies. Probably it's better for her. A drunken husband that won't work is better off in prison even if the wife does have to work," he continued.

The man wept. "Chief, I never knew before until tonight when I heard the boys singing down in the holdover how mean I had been to the little wife and the children. When those four big policemen stood in the middle of the cell room and sang:

"Darling I am growing old, Silver threads among the gold," I just broke down and cried. I didn't know how mean I had been until this singing brought it up to me. Chief, I'm not a crook—only when I'm drunk, I'll never steal again."

Matthews rang a bell above his desk and a police sergeant entered. "Sergeant, see that this man gets work in the morning and keep an eye on him. When he gets paid at the end of the week, take the money and give it to his wife."

"If he gets drunk lock him up and I'll go to court against him personally and see that he gets five years in the pen."

The night scene was over and the two men were back in their cells waiting the happy transition of the morning. More effective had been the work of these police officers of the quartette than all the prisons of the world.

The next day Jim went to the farm and made good, and the other offender worked and worked hard under the sergeant and at the end of his week, his salary was given to his family. Once he appeared for duty half intoxicated but when the sergeant finished with him he was determined never to drink again and never did. After a term of probation he was restored to his family and eventually was able to buy a home and care for their comfort in a very generous way.

GETTING RESULTS.

Many other results have been obtained through this police quartette of Pittsburg. How many a deserter has confessed and gone back to serve his time in the federal penitentiary under the conscientious remorse engendered by "My Country 'Tis of Thee" and how many a boy has confessed being a runaway and been restored to his parents under the strains of "Where Is My Wand'ring Boy Tonight?"

Even the song:

"You made me what I am today—I hope you're satisfied. You dragged and dragged me down until

My soul within me died."

had its effect. While the song was by some author attempting humor and was generally considered such by men who heard it, sung in the confines of a police station to girls who faced imprisonment on charges of immoral conduct, it had the desired effect. In the gay cafe it may have the opposite effect but when sung to a girl facing disgrace and her first prison term, it works to her redemption. Chief Matthews learned.

"You shattered every dream. You dragged me from the skies—And 'though you're not true, May God bless you, That's the curse of an aching heart."

That song was written as sort of a jest but it had the right effect when those four hurly policemen sang it. Girls then realized their mistakes and begged to be taken before the Chief of Police.

He took up their cases individually and learned they were either girls who fled the farm in search of pleasure and comfort in the city, or women who were deserted by their husbands and sought the easiest

means of earning a living. With the former he made arrangements to go back home and saw that they safely arrived in the bosom of their family, while with the other he placed them in charge of patrolmen who saw them straightened out and given employment. In both cases the plan worked well.

Chief Matthews is keeping up his redemption of prisoners by song and declares it is an absolute success. He has rescued more than 100 in the last two months and believes that he can do further good. Prisons, he says, make criminals, while music breaks them and restores them to their normal being.

A Hard Time.

Little Percival's eyes were full of tears. Miss Miggins, a kind soul, attracted by the sound of Percival's sorrow, approached him, saying:

"Come, come, my little man! Why are you crying?"

"Mother smacked me!"

"Why, you're not a naughty little boy, are you?"

"No, I only made some dents in the front doorsteps."

"That doesn't sound a very serious matter. Did you make the dents with your little spade?"

"N-n-no! With father's watch!"

Pot and Kettle.

"That Mrs. Brown is a very cruel woman. When her Tom and my Jack were fighting she pulled Jack's hair."

"Why didn't you prevent her?"

"Well, I was boxing Tom's ears and didn't see what she was doing."

Surely.

"How did you catch that cold?"

"Well, I went fishing and had to bring back something."

Useless to Him.

"Now, Tommy," reprimanded his mother, "don't let me catch you throwing any more stones."

"Well, what will I do when the

other fellows throw 'em?" asked Tommy.

"Just come and tell me," his mother replied.

"Tell you!" he exclaimed in astonishment. "Why, you couldn't hit the broadside of a barn!"

Couldn't Stop Crying.

A benevolent old man, seeing a little tot weeping, went up to it and said: "Now, be a good boy and stop your crying."

"I can't," sobbed the child.

"But why can't you?"

"I can't!"

"Well, here's a penny; tell me why you can't be a good boy and stop crying."

"Cause I'm a girl!"

Stingy Willie.

Teacher (explaining fractions)—Suppose now, Willie, you had eight little boys visiting you and you had only one apple; how much would each little boy get?

Willie—Wouldn't get any. I'd wait till they'd all gone home and eat it myself.

Trouble to Follow.

"How is that novel you're reading?"

"I'm worried about the heroine. I know she's in for a lot of trouble."

"Why so?"

"She gets married at page 27."

Not Sold.

Stranger—Do you keep canned salmon?

Fresh Clerk—No sir; we sell it."

Stranger—Not always, my friend. You can just keep that dozen cans I was going to buy. Good-day.

It Was a Nightmare.

She—I had a most unusual dream last night. I dreamt you kissed me."

He—What is there so unusual about that?"

She—Well, you see, I so seldom have a nightmare."